

CITY OF LYNDON – TOWN HALL MEETING
Saturday, April 21, 2012, 9:00 a.m.
Lyndon Community Center, 204 Topeka

Governing Body: Wayne Howard, Bill Patterson, Brandon Smith, Doug Watson
and Mayor Kay Jones

City Staff Kimberly Newman, City Administrator
Barbara Schattak, City Clerk
Pat Walsh, City Attorney
David Wilson, Maintenance Superintendent
Darrel Manning, Chief of Police
Julie Stutzman, City Treasurer

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order. In addition to the governing body and city staff, approximately twenty-eight community members attended the Town Hall meeting; see attached.

A motion was made by Patterson to approve the following agenda items;

1. Conduct a Town Hall Meeting at the Lyndon Community Center.

Watson seconded the motion, which carried.

Mayor Jones introduced council members and staff. Citizens were invited to take handouts which were placed on a table in the back of the room. It was noted to citizens if there is not enough time to get to all questions, to please write their questions down on forms provided.

A power point presentation was presented by Mayor Jones and the City Administrator of items completed in 2011 and goals for 2012; a copy is attached.

Topics discussed during the presentation by Mayor Jones were:

- The Council works very hard to keep the mill levy from going up. The school district's mill levy has to go up somewhat every year and the townships also have a mill levy and the City tries to be conscientious about the citizens taxes therefore the mill levy has remained flat for three years.
- The City's population has remained constant while neighboring cities are declining.

- The new website (www.LyndonKS.gov) was launched last year; several citizens reported viewing the site. It was noted the community calendar is a popular page on the website.
- A Capital Improvement Plan was adopted which will provide a guideline for future spending and will keep things consistent even with governing body changes. Copies of the plan are available at city hall.
- \$140,000 was spent on road improvements last year and the City plans to spend another \$140,000 this year; which repairs approximately 10 blocks a year.
- Three grants were received in 2011; one for the Bailey House for \$80,000; one for siren replacement for \$15,000 and one for GPS mapping of water and sewer lines for \$4,000. Mayor Jones invited participants to view the GPS maps which were brought to the meeting.
- Two new sirens were received through a grant to replace the older siren. The older siren had been re-built in 1998, it is set off through a landline system, if the power is out the siren will not work and a new base is needed as well. The new sirens are battery operated and can be set off by radio. The sirens are located by the old standpipes on the north side of town and the other is by the pool at Jones Park. With the new sirens the coverage area has been increased, a map of the city was shown showing the area covered. It was noted the sirens are not designed to be heard in your home. Mayor Jones reported the sirens are set off by the Sheriff's Office as well as the other town's sirens in the county.
- This past year the City worked in conjunction with KRWA to map all of the water and sewer lines by using GPS (global position system). This will help with the daily maintenance of these lines as well as help with future planning. The GPS mapping will also help to assist locating lines and connections should there ever be a disaster in our community.
- Mayor Jones named all the Tree Board members as: Brad Loveless, Chair, Linda Harrington, Rick Schmidt, Robert Fitch, Steve Zerr and Leisa Albers; there are three vacancies as well. Mayor Jones stated we have been a Tree City since 2001. April is Arbor month and next weekend trees will available for citizens to order. The City Clerk reported she can still take orders for trees. Steve Zerr who is a member of the Lyndon Tree Board reported the board meets twice a year. In the spring there is a team meeting to determine when the spring planting will be done, work with citizens to plant trees in their yards and give a class as how to plant trees. There is a fall meeting and a fall planting if it is needed. The Tree Board also prunes the trees they have planted and will assist any citizen with their trees. Laura Moore inquired as to where the trees come from and if there is an order form to fill out to purchase trees; Steve Zerr stated the trees are purchased through Westar and Brad Loveless works on their green team. It was noted if anyone wanted to purchase a tree all they needed to do was call City Hall. This year the trees are eight to nine feet high and cost \$25.
- Julie Stutzman, Jt. Recreation Commission member, reported baseball season is gearing up and parents can still sign up their children. The batting cages are

open now and the Recreation Commission held a dance a few weeks ago at the Community Center. If anyone would like to attend a Jt. Recreation Commission meeting they are held on the third Sunday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the school commons area. Mayor Jones reported the Jt. Recreation Commission is a five member board; the City appoints two positions which are held by Julie Stutzman and Glenda Bronson. The school district appoints two positions and the four appointed positions choose the at large position.

- Mayor Jones introduced members of the Planning & Zoning Commission as Peggy Clark, Deb Edwards, Charna Williams, Darrel Manning and James "Darby" Kneisler. Charna Williams, Chairman of the Planning & Zoning Commission, reported they meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall council room and are currently working on updating the Comprehensive Plan which is an overview of ideas and goals for the City Council to achieve. Charna announced the zoning regulations for the city and application forms are on the City's website and the meetings are open to the public and all are welcomed to attend. Charna gave a brief explanation as to why there are zoning regulations; zoning is to protect the safety and well being of all citizens.
- Charna Williams and Peggy Clark, HPPL (Historic Preservation Partnership of Lyndon) members gave a brief history of the Bailey House and the repairs done at the house through the grant. The Bailey House is now listed on the Historical Registry. Peggy stated the grant is through Heritage Trust and is an 80/20 grant and explained tax credits are 25% of what the City spends and can be sold if the City so chooses. Once the Bailey House is restored it will be placed on the National Freedoms Frontier tour map; it is posted on their online map. It was announced if anyone was interested the house will be open after the town hall meeting for viewing. Peggy is currently working on a grant to develop a website for the Bailey House. It was announced HPPL will be doing a membership drive.

Topics discussed during the presentation by the City Administrator were:

- The City Administrator announced there is a new Lyndon Pride which currently has 25 plus members and growing. Pride meetings are held monthly; citizens were encouraged to join Pride.
- Pride is hosting the 4th of July Celebration which will be held on July 4, 2012, beginning at 7:00 a.m. with a Pancake Feed by the Salt Creek Lighthouse Assembly of God and Horseshoe Tournament at 7:30 a.m. There will also be a Horse Parade at 10:30 a.m. followed by a Picnic at City Park at 11:00 a.m. with lunch being served by the Masons, games for kids until 3:00 p.m., the pool will be open and free to the public during the day. The Saddle Club will open at 6:00 p.m.; there will be music and giveaways. At 9:00 p.m. the fireworks show will begin.

- A Summer Movie Series is being planned in the City Park again this year; dates announced were June 16th, July 14th, and August 11th. Movie titles will be announced in the near future. The City Administrator also announced the day of the Christmas Parade there will be a double feature at the school and will be a canned food drive.
- The City is in charge of the Farmers Market now and it is still located on the courthouse lawn beginning May 7, 2012 and will be on every Monday to October 29th. Hours have also changed with the Market being from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. and free for vendors to participate or a \$5 donation. If vendors do not have a sales tax number, they can use the city's special event number twice during the market season. It was noted there will be traditional vendors, crafters and non-profit organizations can have up to 6 fundraisers during the market season.
- City Hall will have new office hours during the summer; Monday evenings the office will be open until 7:00 p.m.; the office will also be open during lunch time as well. Mayor Jones will have office hours on the first Monday of the month from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- A developer is interested in building low income senior housing in Lyndon. This is a million dollar project and the first phase will include eight or ten units. To meet eligibility to live in these units you need to be 55 or older and meet the income threshold. If the first phase is successful then another eight to ten units and a community building will be built in phase two. The housing is all fair housing and will be on a first come first served basis of those who meet qualifications. The City's role is to provide water, sewer, roads, etc. The land either is donated or a very low cost to the developer; this helps keep the rates low for the seniors. Currently the City's engineer and the developer's engineer are doing a cost study on the project.
- The City has \$300,000 in the bank in reserves in case anything happens. An operating reserve is typically three months of expenditures; which in the general, water and sewer funds expenditures are \$243,000 for the City, leaving only \$61,000 for emergencies.
- A brief history of how the water and sewer funds have fared the past 5 years was given by the City Administrator. It was noted there needs to be a 20% increase to cover existing debt in water just to break even and 23% in sewer to cover its existing debt to break even. The City, through a state program, submitted audits and water rate history to Ranson Financial who looked at our rates and recommended a 31% increase in the water fund which includes capital improvement to protect infrastructure of water and sewer lines. The sewer fund has a \$100,000 bond payment every year and the water fund has bond payments of \$51,000 every year.
- In order to make rate increases bearable the utility rates will be increasing this year by 15% for both water and sewer in July and another 15% increase in both funds in January of 2013. The new water and sewer ordinances will have an

automatic 3% increase built in to prevent problems in the future. Slides were shown how the increases will affect water bills.

- Also there will be a stormwater utility fee added to everyone's bills beginning in July; residential customers will be charged \$1 a month and business \$2. The fund will help with drainage issues throughout town instead of using funds set aside for road improvements.
- Will be working on a policy for a sidewalk replacement program; which will have a limited amount of funding allocated to it each year. In the capital improvement the City has fund \$5,000 for sidewalk replacement. This program will be a cost share program between the City and the homeowner on a first come first served basis. If anyone is interested, a letter needs to be submitted to City Hall.
- ADA requirements for pools have been changed and adopted this year requiring all pools to have a sloped entry or zero entry for handicap accessibility; modifications to our pool for a zero entry access would have a minimum cost of \$250,000. The City still owes \$75,000 on the pool as it is now. In order to satisfy ADA requirements, the City has purchased a lift chair for the pool and will begin saving funds for a pool overhaul in the future. It was also noted the kiddie pool is non-compliant as well; our engineer felt as the City has showed good faith by purchasing the lift we can open the kiddie pool this year but will need to do modifications next year which could cost a minimum \$25,000 to \$30,000.
- Julie Stutzman reported changes have been made to the pool rates: regular admission fee is \$2; coupon books will cost \$25 for twenty-five swims which will be available by mid-May; 60 and over will be free with a senior pass. The pool will open Saturday, May 26th and hours will be 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. There will be water aerobics, swimming lessons will begin the third week of June and there will be games on the 4th of July.
- Citizens were informed of the following meetings and events: a special council meeting after the town hall meeting to discuss the council vacancy, citywide clean up day on April 28th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., household hazardous waste collection from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., city wide garage sale on June 23rd, a car show on June 23rd, and city budget meetings will begin in July.

Mayor Jones reminded everyone the recycle center is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month. Items they will take are newspapers, magazines, office paper, junk paper, cardboard, and all plastic with a one or a two on it (be sure to rinse out the plastic items.)

The floor was opened to questions.

Q: Byron Jordan thanked the City of taking over the Farmers Market and changing the hours. How does the City rank regarding water and sewer rates with other towns our size?

A: The League of Kansas Municipalities had prepared a list in 2010; which shows we are high but not the highest. Lyndon is higher than others in our area but each city's debts are different. Other cities have two rates one for residential and one for business where Lyndon only has one rate. Mayor Jones stated as cities are facing infrastructure projects they are looking for matching grants without having to do a bond issue and adding more debt.

Q: Byron Jordan stated he lives on Ash Street which is in bad need of repair; how does the City determine the order of streets for repair?

A: The City Administrator stated Ash Street is the worst street but it has a water line under it which needs replaced and it is a \$60,000 project. Every year there are leaks to fix which undermines the road more. Ash Street is on the top of the list and as soon as the City has the money Ash Street will be repaired.

Q: Byron Jordan asked if the City could put money in their budget to repaint the parking stripes along Topeka and the crosswalks as well.

A: The City Administrator reported the parking spaces are taped and the City will look into what needs to be done to make it look brighter.

Q: Chris Cole inquired of when the slides were showing the water and sewer funds in the negative, do funds come out of the general operating reserve to cover them and if so, will the increase in rates replenish what comes out of the general fund?

A: The City Administrator reported the increase in rates would generate \$10,000 a year in sewer and \$33,000 in water. The City has \$305,000 in CDs and can re-allocate those CDs to cover these operating reserves. This leaves \$61,000 which is one street of repairs. The City has been using the one percent sales tax to cover expenses which has left no reserves available for projects.

Q: Chris Cole asked if city property taxes are being used to pay the negative in the utility funds.

A: Property taxes are not being used to take care of deficits in the utility funds. Utility funds are supposed to be self-sustaining.

Q: Jim Thurman stated when there was a state-wide alert he had to go outside to hear the sirens and still couldn't hear them.

A: The City Administrator reported the new sirens rotate 360 degrees; the sound should have gotten louder but it didn't. The City may have to look into getting more horns to make it louder. The older siren has to be moved because of its base needing repaired. Watson stated individuals have complained about not hearing the sirens within their homes; sirens are designed to be heard outside only. Individuals have other options available to them when they are inside such as a weather radio, news reports or notifications sent to your cell phone. The City Administrator also reported

the City Hall is a shelter and has been open during the last two storms. During the last storm the Methodist Church was open as well and it has handicap accessibility.

Q: Hazel Atchison asked if City Hall and the Church are the only two places in town.

A. The school is also a shelter and it was open during the last storm as Prom was going on. But the City can accommodate several people; there is a kitchen and bathrooms in the basement.

Q. Bruce Oelke asked about the quality of water; it tastes terrible.

A. The water comes from Public Wholesale Water Supply District No. 12 and is treated before it is introduced into our pipes. Lakes turn over from time to time causing the bad taste in the water. The people who monitor the water have to meet standards from KDHE and EPA or else be fined and a boil order would be put in place. The complaint will be passed on. Individuals should notify the City when they notice the problem.

Q. Teresa Calvert questioned the senior housing project; does it bring any money into the city.

A. The City Administrator reported the buildings will generate water and sewer but it also pays taxes 60% of what normal taxes would be at the facility. Investors buy tax credits as it is a federal program and at the end of 15 years the developer gifts the buildings to the City and they become a City asset for a \$1; the City then gains the responsibility of the buildings and maintaining the structures. Mayor Kay Jones reported she and Councilman Wayne Howard viewed the senior housing at Humboldt and was very pleased with the look of the project. The City Administrator stated as excited as members are with the project the City does not pursue projects they cannot afford to do. The City only makes healthy financial decisions and make sure we do the research and follow up with the developers and make sure it is a good investment for our community.

Q. Teresa Calvert, are there any costs included in the water that could be cut?

A. Mayor Jones stated in analyzing how to set water rates we are looking at every expense that hits the fund and going through them very carefully. The City Administrator reported 15% of salaries and benefits for city employees are charged to water and sewer funds, this is a common practice that occurs in every city. The entire bill for health insurance for the city is \$110,000 which is about 19 mills; a mill is worth \$5700. Even if the City would cut the benefits 50% and bring the cost to the City to \$55,000 and we take out it out of water and sewer that is still 10 mills that will need to be paid from somewhere and it will go towards the mill rate changing it from 57 mills to 67 mills if we move benefits.

Q. Teresa Calvert asked if benefits are paid for the employee and their families at 100% still.

A. The City Administrator reported they are and the City is in a three year contract with the State and many small towns are at 100% still. The contract we are currently in is up for renewal in 2013; the City will be looking at health insurance through budget preparation and will start negotiations in January.

Q: John Calvert asked what kind of costs the City Administrator has looked at eliminating anywhere in the budget, it is obvious we are in a fiscal crunch. He sees plans to spend anywhere to \$100,000 for water and sewer for the senior housing, concern for the pool for \$250,000 for the next 10 years to try to come up with that money; what kind of costs have you looked at eliminating? John stated when he and the City Administrator talked last summer they both agreed this is a pretty small town to have a full time administrator and she had told him she was phasing her own position out.

A. The City Administrator agreed with the city being small and it is her goal to get the City to a place where you decide whether or not you have projects that warrant the actual position.

Q. John Calvert stated to the council they are elected to represent what the community wants, not to manage.

A. Council member Smith responded by saying for the last 50 to 75 years this City didn't do anything. Didn't raise costs on anything or save any money. If you don't raise costs and don't put anything in the bank, you run into these budget problems. When he got on the council there was no capital plan or anything. Kim shows up and got a plan in action, got things moving, we know we have to save money, generate money to do these plans down the road. You don't just take out a \$100,000 bond and make payments.

Q. John Calvert questioned the sales tax; he sees nothing in the plans to bring businesses to town. We don't even have a grocery store in this city and suggested tax abatements or tax incentives.

A. The City Administrator stated Kansas right now, and you can read any national news report, there is a crisis of grocery stores in all of rural America. The City cannot control or dictate business in the community, what we can control is providing resources to our residents. One thing the City attempted to do this year to meet that subsidy, to provide healthy fruits and vegetables, was to apply for a Community Garden Grant that would have been distributed free to all residents in the community to meet the need of fresh fruits and vegetables which was lost by losing the grocery store. Tax abatements are fantastic in theory, however, we have \$60,000 in the bank and business dictates itself. We have a business in town that sells food and is building a larger facility in town where the grocery store was located.

Q: John Calvert asked the City Administrator what kind of suggestions could be made to council members to help bring new business here to increase potential sales tax revenue.

A. The City Administrator stated the County provides an Economic Development person who coordinates development for the entire county. The latest development we are working on is senior housing to generate money. The City has been working with developers for over a year to expand commercial development down 75 Highway, however, to provide abatements or water and sewer infrastructure to sites to provide commercial businesses is \$350,000 for the City to pay for which clearly we don't have in the bank. We could pass a bond issue which would then have to be passed by residents, that is the City's role in economic development.

Q. Laura Moore asked about the senior housing and who will maintain the buildings and yards.

A. Mayor Jones reported there will be management for the project; possibly somebody from the area. The City Administrator also reported if the project happens the developer plans to buy as much of their materials as possible locally and to solicit for contract work locally in order to get the project done.

Mayor Jones thanked all who attended the town hall meeting for coming and stated if someone's question had not been answered to please write it down and give it to her.

Patterson invited all to come to any council meeting. Watson invited anyone to run for council if they would like to be part of the decisions. Mayor Jones invited everyone to join a board, commission or the Pride; help our town.

The City Administrator reported there is a Pride Meeting on May 7th; doing a fundraiser at the Farmers Market from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. all are welcome to attend.

At 10:59 a.m., a motion was made by Watson to close the town hall meeting. Howard seconded the motion, which carried.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Schattak".

Barbara Schattak
City Clerk